

Motown Record Corporation

Alt name: Hitsville U. S. A

Address: 2648 W. Grand Blvd.

Local

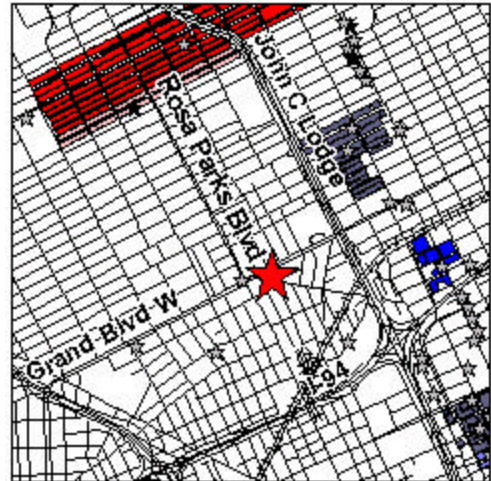
State v 8/21/87

State Marker v 11/11/87

National



Motown, 2003



Historic Overview:

The "Motown Sound" was created on this site from 1959 to 1972. The company started with an \$800 loan from the savings club of the Bertha and Barry Gordy Sr., family. Originally called Tamla Records, the company's first national release was "Money (That's What I Want)," in August 1959. The founder, choosing a name that reflected the Motor City, coined the word "Motown" for the company that was incorporated as the Motown Record Corporation on April 14, 1960. That same year it produced its first gold record, "Shop Around." In 1968 the company, which had grown from a family-oriented business to an international enterprise, moved its business operations to 2457 Woodward. Motown provided an opportunity for Detroit's inner-city youth to reach their full potential and become super stars.

By the end of its first decade, Motown was the largest independent manufacturer of single 45 rpm records in the world. Among Motown's record labels were Tamla, Motown, Gordy, Soul, VIP, Rare Earth, Black Forum, Workshop, Jazz, Divinity and others. In 1972 Motown moved its headquarters to Los Angeles, California. The company expanded its television productions and entered the motion picture industry. Lady Sings the Blues, Motown's first feature-length film, received five Academy Award Nominations. By 1975, Motown Industries was the largest black-owned corporation in the world. In 1980 the Motown Historical Museum was established at Hitsville U.S.A. to commemorate the Motown Sound and to memorialize Motown's distinctive heritage and its global impact.

Text as written on Michigan Historical Marker.

